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Puerto Rico was discovered by Christopher Columbus in 1493. The process of colonization began in 1508, with the arrival of Ponce de Leon and his Spanish soldiers. Puerto Rico was governed by Spain for about 400 years, and the great mass of people remained poverty-stricken, undernourished, and illiterate. The island was ceded to the United States in 1898; U.S. citizenship was extended to Puerto Ricans in 1917. Most Puerto Ricans regard 1940 as the beginning of the island's modern era, for in that year a new political party came into power, and the struggle for progress began. On July 25, 1952, Puerto Rico became a Commonwealth or Free State. As neither an independent nation nor a U.S. state, Puerto Rico is self-governing in local affairs while preserving economic and political ties beneficial both to the United States and to the island.

The island's two major problems are overpopulation and lack of natural resources. Since 1940, great strides have been made in improving all facets of Puerto Rican life. Increase in total net income, rise in average family income, development of a middle class, decrease in death and birth rates, increased life expectancy, advance in public health, a doubling of school enrollment, public housing and slum clearance programs, and rural settlement are examples of the great progress made since 1940.

Since Puerto Ricans are American citizens, there is no restriction on movement between the island and the mainland. An expanding labor market attracts thousands of Puerto Ricans to the U.S. each year for industrial, agricultural, and professional jobs. Problems faced by migrants include general adjustment, prejudice and discrimination, the language barrier, housing, and dependency on public assistance.

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NEGRO HISTORY; OTHER MINORITIES:
— TEACHING GUIDES, RESOURCE MATERIALS —

Puerto Rico and the Puerto Ricans

An Outline of Basic Facts for . . .

- **SPEAKERS**
- **EDUCATORS**
- **CIVIC & RELIGIOUS LEADERS**

Compiled by **HERBERT STERNAU**

Office of Education-EEOP

Research and Materials Branch **Bennett O. Stalvey**

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INTRODUCTION

Many civic, educational, political and religious leaders have felt the need to discuss Puerto Rico and the Puerto Ricans since the increased migration of the past decade has brought many of our fellow American citizens from the island to the U. S. mainland.

The need for information in a form designed for speakers was expressed to the author while he was serving on the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Puerto Rican Affairs in New York City, and he decided to attempt to supply the need.

This pamphlet is the result. It is, of course, only an outline and the reader may wish to supplement these basic facts with more detailed information. To this end, a brief list of publications and sources has been included.

The Migration Division of the Department of Labor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Council of Spanish-American Organizations, the New York City Commission on Intergroup Relations, the New York Chapter of the American Jewish Committee and many interested individuals lent valuable assistance in bringing this pamphlet to completion.

Herbert Sternau

I. PUERTO RICO

Puerto Rico's Colonial History

DISCOVERY BY COLUMBUS

Puerto Rico was discovered by Christopher Columbus on his second voyage to the New World. On November 19, 1493, he took possession of the island for Isabella, Queen of Castille, naming it *San Juan Bautista* (Saint John the Baptist).

SETTLEMENT BY PONCE DE LEON

In 1508, Juan Ponce de León, later to discover Florida (1513), began the process of colonization with a contingent of about 50 Spanish soldiers. He found the Borinquen Indians who inhabited the island a peaceful, friendly, agricultural people.

Puerto Rico is still often called *Borinquen* after the Indians, and the Puerto Ricans, *Borinqueños* or *Boricuas*. The name *Puerto Rico* (Rich Port) was first given by the Spanish to the beautiful harbor and then to the city now known as San Juan. Some years later, a mapmaker erroneously reversed the names of the island and the city and over the years the change was widely accepted and became official.

UNDER SPANISH RULE

Puerto Rico was governed by Spain for about 400 years, chiefly valued as a naval outpost of the Spanish Empire. The island's economy functioned primarily for the benefit of a small, wealthy class. The

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great mass of the people were poverty-stricken, undernourished, and illiterate.

The Indians disappeared as a distinct racial group early in Puerto Rico's history. Negro slaves were brought to the island by the Spanish, beginning in 1511. In 1873, slavery was abolished peacefully. The Spanish, Negroes and, to a lesser extent, Borinquen Indians constitute Puerto Rico's major racial heritage, although many other origins are represented to a small degree. The island's population today is 20 per cent Negro *(U.S. Census, 1950)*.

A UNITED STATES POSSESSION, 1898-1952

The island was ceded to the United States on December 10, 1898, as a result of the Spanish-American War, thus fulfilling Theodore Roosevelt's goal of securing a defense bulwark for the Panama Canal. It was not until then that programs of public health, education and other measures to improve living conditions were introduced. However, very slow progress was made in most fields. While a number of constructive Federal programs, such as public health, were extended to Puerto Rico, the United States seemed to show little real understanding of the island's over-all needs and problems until recent years.

U.S. citizenship was extended to Puerto Rico by the Jones Act, passed by Congress in 1917. The island's governors, however, were appointed by Washington until 1948, when amendments to the act made the post elective. Luis Muñoz Marín then became the first governor elected by the Puerto Rican people, taking office January 1, 1949.

UNTIL 1940: "A LAND WITHOUT HOPE"

As recently as 1940, Puerto Rico was regarded by many as a land without hope. Often called "the stricken land," it was an underdeveloped area typical of many others throughout the world—the fruits of over four centuries of colonial rule. It bore all of the characteristics of underdevelopment—low wages, chronic mass unemployment, poor standard of living, and high disease and death rates—and was almost entirely dependent upon one crop, sugar cane.

THE TURNING POINT

Most Puerto Ricans regard 1940 as the beginning of the island's modern era. In that year, a new political party was elected to power in the Puerto Rican Legislature—the Popular Democratic Party—with the island's present governor, Luis Muñoz Marín, as its leader. This marked the beginning of Puerto Rico's dramatic uphill struggle for progress which Muñoz has named "Operation Bootstrap."

Together with the planning of "Operation Bootstrap" came the beginnings of a creative solution to the age-old problem of statehood versus independence, a solution realized 12 years later when Puerto Rico became a self-governing Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

SELF-GOVERNMENT ACHIEVED

On July 25, 1952, Puerto Rico ceased to be a U.S. possession and became the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico (in Spanish: *Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto*

Rico, or *Associated Free State*). The transformation proceeded in accordance with a compact between the United States and Puerto Rico. A constitution drafted by Puerto Rico was approved by Congress and by overwhelming votes of the Puerto Rican people in a series of referendums.

The Constitution of Puerto Rico is patterned after the U.S. Constitution. Besides a Bill of Rights, it contains provisions guaranteeing minority parties a minimum representation in the island's Legislature (by increasing its size), even if they do not actually elect a single member by popular vote.

As neither an independent nation nor a constituent state of the United States, Puerto Rico is self-governing in local affairs while preserving economic and political ties beneficial both to the United States and to the island.

The Island's Major Problems

OVERPOPULATION

Puerto Rico's population increased from less than 45,000 in 1765 to 2,281,000 on July 1, 1957. The island has a population density 12 times that of the United States and is more densely populated than either Japan or the United Kingdom. (U.S. population: 57 persons per square mile; Puerto Rico: 664 persons per square mile.) If the United States had as many people per square mile as Puerto Rico, our population would include almost everybody in the whole world.

During the last few years the population pressure has been greatly accentuated by a dramatic decline

in the death rate (the result of progress in public health and improved living standards), accompanied by a much smaller decline in the birth rate.

LACK OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Only about one-half of Puerto Rico's 3,435 square miles is arable. To date, research has failed to discover any mineral resources of sufficient quality or quantity to merit commercial use.

Economic Progress

"OPERATION BOOTSTRAP"

The program's major goal is an economy based on diversified manufacturing industries—the only means whereby a small, densely-populated area can effect real improvement in its standard of living.

Delayed by World War II, the program did not really get under way until the postwar years. The Puerto Rican Government's first efforts consisted of building and operating factories. Experience showed, however, that the necessary capital requirements and technical and managerial skills could best be obtained through private financing and operation, with the Government supplying technical assistance and financial incentive through 100 per cent tax exemption for a limited period.

Since Puerto Rico has no vote in U.S. national elections or in Congress, Federal taxes have never applied to the island. In addition, Puerto Rico will exempt a new industry from all local corporate taxes for a period of ten years, provided it is not a "runaway firm" from the United States. No inducement

is offered to any firm that closes a factory anywhere on the mainland in order to open one in Puerto Rico.

By November 1957, Puerto Rico had over 500 new factories in operation, employing some 40,000 workers.

MANUFACTURING SURPASSES AGRICULTURE

In the spring of 1956 Puerto Rico passed a historic milestone. For the first time in its history, income from manufacturing surpassed income from agriculture. For the fiscal year 1956-57, manufacturing income totaled $213 million while agricultural totaled $152 million.

NET INCOME

Puerto Rico's total net income increased from $225 million in 1939-40 to $1,007 million in 1956-57. On a per capita basis, income increased from $121 per person to $443. Although still considerably below the United States (about one-half the per capita income in Mississippi, our poorest state), Puerto Rico's level is the highest in the Caribbean area and the second highest in all of Latin America, exceeded only by Venezuela.

AVERAGE FAMILY INCOME

Between 1940 and 1956, the average annual family income rose from $660 to $2,400. Allowing for the rise in cost of living during this period, this means a real increase in family purchasing power of over 80 per cent. Wage earners' family incomes have

increased even more rapidly than family incomes as a whole, showing that the working man is actively participating in the economic advances.

Puerto Rico's goal is to match present U.S. living standards by about 1975.

DEVELOPMENT OF A MIDDLE CLASS

An important outgrowth of Puerto Rico's democratic development is the emergence of a middle class, changing the old colonial picture of only the very rich and the very poor, with no group in between.

Progress in Public Health

BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

During 1940-1957,[1] the island's annual death rate dropped from 18.4 deaths per 1,000 population to 7.0. During the same period, the infant mortality rate dropped from 113.4 per 1,000 live births to 51.4.

Although the infant mortality rate is still considerably above that of the United States (26.4 per 1,000 in 1957), the general death rate is lower (U.S.: 9.6 in 1957).

During 1940-1957, the birth rate also decreased—though much less rapidly than the death rate—from 38.5 births per 1,000 to 32.6. A continuing decrease is expected as social and economic conditions and

1. Data for 1957 are preliminary.

educational facilities continue to improve and the small-family ideal takes further root.[1]

LIFE EXPECTANCY

Life expectancy at birth has increased from 46 years in 1940 to 68 years in 1955 (date of latest estimate), an average annual rise of 1.5 years. This is the most rapid rate of increase known anywhere in the world. Puerto Rico's life expectancy now compares creditably with that of the United States (70 years in 1955).

DISEASE RATES

Dramatic advances in public health have been brought about by the establishment of clinics and hospitals throughout the island, immunization against preventable diseases, and construction of safe water supply and sewage disposal systems. The death rate from tuberculosis, for example, has been reduced by more than 87 per cent, and malaria has

---

1. Studies of Puerto Rican families show that, as in other countries, family size decreases with increased income and education. For example, mothers with no schooling were found to have an average of 6.1 children; mothers who had attended school only a year or two, 5.0 children; mothers who had completed the eighth grade, 3.4 children; mothers who had completed high school, 2.4 children. A similar relationship was found between family income and number of children.

   In recent years, a notable increase has been noted in the public demand for information on birth control. The dissemination of such information has been legalized in the island, and it is provided on request by the public health centers throughout the Commonwealth. The Family Planning Association, a private organization affiliated with Planned Parenthood, is also conducting an active program of education in family planning.

been wiped out. The great strides made are illustrated in the following table:

DEATH RATES FROM PREVENTABLE DISEASES

	Rate per 100,000 Population		*Percentage Decrease*
Cause	*1940*	*1957*	
Diarrhea and enteritis	405.2	60.1	85.2
Tuberculosis	260.2	33.2	87.2
Pneumonia	169.2	45.8	72.9
Nephritis	108.4	9.6	91.1
Malaria	96.8	0.0	100.0
Syphilis	27.4	2.1	92.3

Although the number of doctors and dentists is slowly reaching the point of fulfilling the island's needs, the recruitment of registered nurses continues to be a problem, as it is in the United States. This is partly because island customs still frown on an unmarried woman ministering to the bodily needs of male patients—one of several factors which tend to give nursing a low social status.

Progress in Education

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM UNTIL 1948

When the United States took over Puerto Rico in 1898, it attempted to remedy the lamentable lack of educational facilities. But the new system initiated by the Federal Government showed little understanding of, or respect for, the customs and needs of the Puerto Rican people. Except for a brief period from 1930 to 1936, English was the required language of instruction in all school subjects even though Spanish was Puerto Rico's native language. As a result, learning was gravely hampered and English

became a symbol of colonialism. Moreover, even as recently as 1940, Puerto Rico's schools were able to accommodate only 51 per cent of the school-age population. Thus, the system administered from Washington, although a notable improvement over the schools of the 19th century, was highly unsatisfactory.

EDUCATION SINCE 1948

The Congressional legislation enabling the Puerto Rican people to elect their own governor also permitted the governor to appoint a commissioner of education, responsible to him and to the people rather than to the Federal Government. This marked the beginning of a new and dynamic era in Puerto Rican education.

NEW APPROACH TO LANGUAGE

Spanish has been restored as the language in which school classes are taught, with English a preferred subject from the first grade on, beginning with conversational English and proceeding to reading and writing. This step is designed to produce a citizenry educated in both languages, rather than illiterate in both—frequently the result of the previous system. In the Spring of 1957, 14,381 persons were enrolled in adult English classes alone.

ADULT AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

An estimated 25,000 persons are currently receiving some form of vocational training, in trades ranging from aircraft mechanics to practical nurs-

ing. Great stress has also been placed on facilities for adult education, such as evening high schools, community education programs, both in isolated rural communities and urban areas, and programs of vocational rehabilitation.

THE UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO

Founded in 1903, the University has grown steadily in physical plant, enrollment and academic standing. Not only is it one of the showplaces of the island, with buildings and campuses of outstanding beauty; it also ranks as one of the top institutions of higher education in Latin America. Its 17 colleges, divisions, and schools are attended by more than 15,000 students (as compared with less than 5,000 in 1940), many of whom work during the day and attend classes in the evening. Extramural courses in various towns throughout the island are also well attended by teachers and others whose places of employment are too far away to permit on-campus attendance. The University of Puerto Rico is the 19th largest U.S. university in terms of total enrollment.

OVER-ALL ADVANCES, 1940-1957

School enrollment has more than doubled between 1940 and 1957, rising from 297,000 pupils to 715,000. During the same period, expenditures for education rose from $7.3 million to $66.0 million, or from $24 per pupil to $92. In 1956-57, Puerto Rico spent 29 per cent of its total budget on education, a larger proportion than any other country in the world except Israel.

In 1940, the island's schools accommodated 51 per

cent of the school-age population; today they accommodate 85 per cent. Ninety-four per cent of all children of elementary school age are now in school, compared with about 96 per cent in the United States. (No country reaches 100 per cent.) The literacy rate has increased from 69 per cent of the population in 1940 to 83 per cent today.

Progress in Housing

HOUSING IN 1950

Puerto Rico's underdevelopment until recent years has been reflected in poor housing conditions. In 1950, about 95,000 urban dwellings were in slum areas. The following table, based on the 1950 Census, provides an index of the island's serious needs at that time:

PER CENT OF DWELLINGS RATED AS DILAPIDATED

	Urban	*Rural*
Puerto Rico	25.8	37.0
United States	5.9	15.4

Puerto Rico's mild climate alleviates the seriousness of dilapidated housing to some extent, especially in rural areas where dwellings are not crowded together and there is plenty of sunshine and fresh air.

PUBLIC HOUSING

Since 1950, outstanding progress has been made through public and private housing, slum clearance, and rural resettlement. In urban areas, some 25,000 public housing units and about the same number of private dwellings have been constructed. Through

public housing programs, 25 per cent of the slums have been eliminated. By 1970, the Government expects to have eliminated all slum dwellings existing in 1950.

In some instances, entire areas of land formerly occupied by slums have been completely cleared of all dwellings, with families moved to low-cost public housing projects and the better houses from slum areas moved to more desirable locations where they are improved by their owners.

The director of the U. S. Federal Housing Administration (FHA) declared recently that Puerto Rico is doing a better job in public housing than most sections of the continental U.S.

RURAL RESETTLEMENT

Since 1941, the rural resettlement program has relocated over 54,000 families in low-cost houses in more than 200 resettlement communities, dramatically improving their living conditions and providing community life for many previously isolated families. The striking feature of this program is that it is a self-help enterprise; the Commonwealth Government provides a minimum of technical assistance and the houses are built by the people themselves. The program has attracted wide attention in many of the world's underdeveloped areas.

PRIVATE HOUSING

Exceptional progress has also been made in the private construction of middle-income homes. One such project in Puerto Rico was, at the time it was

built, the world's largest private housing project. The style of architecture now being developed in the island, a blend of modern and old Spanish known as "Caribbean contemporary," is attracting increased interest among U. S. architects.

Religion

Although exact figures are not available, it is usually estimated that the population of Puerto Rico is about 80 per cent Catholic and 20 per cent Protestant. A few other religious groups are represented—including a small Jewish community with its own center in Santurce—but their membership is small.

During the four centuries of Spanish rule, the Catholic Church stood out as the island's warm and loving mother, in contrast to an unfeeling and selfish civil government which took what it could from Puerto Rico and gave as little as possible to the people.

After hundreds of years of want and degradation, the Puerto Rican is an outstanding example of a person with strong family ties, generosity and warmth, pride of heritage, and a high standard of values. Sociologists attribute this to a variety of factors, but the Church can point with pride to its accomplishments in nurturing the people's finer qualities over centuries of heart-breaking adversities.

Shortly after the island was ceded to the United States, the influence of Protestantism began to be felt and has increased steadily during the past half-

century. Protestant churches are found in most parts of the island today and the contributions of Protestantism can be seen in such institutions as the Presbyterian Hospital in San Juan and the Inter-American University (formerly the Polytechnic Institute) in San Germán. Protestantism has given Puerto Rico many of its educational and civic leaders.

II. THE MIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

Reasons and Facts

NOT ENOUGH JOBS

Despite Puerto Rico's tremendous progress in creating new jobs, raising wage levels, and reducing unemployment, there are still too few jobs for the island's expanding population. In the fiscal year 1956-57, unemployment averaged 84,000, or 13 per cent of the labor force. This is the push factor behind the migration.

THE U. S. LABOR MARKET

The major factor in the migration, however, is the pull from the U. S. mainland. Puerto Rican workers in search of better opportunities are attracted by our rapidly expanding labor market, with shortages of workers in many localities and industries and generally higher wages than Puerto Rican industry is yet able to pay.

Looking back over the past half-century, it is evident that the volume of migration is mainly determined by economic conditions in the United States. For example, the annual average for the period 1908-30 was 1,986; for the depression decade of 1931-40, it was only 904. During the deep depression years in this period, as during earlier recessions around 1909-11 and 1920-22, there was actually a net migration back to the island.

German submarine activity in the Caribbean greatly curtailed migration during World War II, keeping the annual average down to 6,060 for the period 1941-45 despite a greatly increased demand for workers in the U. S. economy. With the availability of transportation the annual average rose to 41,315 for the years 1946-57. Migration figures for the past five years show the effect of the recessions which occurred in the U. S. in 1954 and 1957:

1953	69,124
1954	21,531
1955	45,464
1956	52,315
1957	37,704

Migration dropped 69 per cent between 1953 and 1954 in response to the drop in job opportunities, rose in 1955 and 1956 as our economy expanded, and fell again with the recession beginning in 1957.

THE MIGRANTS

Studies of the Puerto Rican migrants show that, like all groups of voluntary migrants, they include a larger proportion of more skilled and better educated persons than would be found in a perfect cross section of the island's labor force.

One reason that many people do not realize this fact is that they have created in their own minds a stereotype of the Puerto Rican migrant based on the person who tends to be conspicuous in his new environment—the migrant who does not speak English well and is distinguishable by his general appearance or dress. The thousands of Puerto Ricans already well-adjusted to life in the United States are inconspicuous and therefore are frequently not even

recognized as Puerto Ricans. Readers of this outline who have themselves come to the United States from abroad or are members of so-called minority groups will be familiar with the ways in which unfair stereotypes are created.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Since Puerto Ricans are American citizens, there are no restrictions on movement between the island and the mainland, just as there are no restrictions on movement between the states. Every year, in fact, about 10 million residents of the continental United States move across county or state lines for the same reason that Puerto Ricans migrate—better job opportunities in the new area.

As a rule, the Government of the Commonwealth neither encourages nor discourages migration, believing that in a democratic society the individual must be free to choose the place where he can best develop as a useful citizen. However, when there are limited job opportunities in the United States, the Puerto Rican Government does discourage migration by publicizing conditions in the States via newspaper articles and radio programs in Puerto Rico; in addition, the Puerto Rico Employment Service urges people not to migrate unless they are sure of jobs here.

DISPERSION OF THE MIGRANTS

Although most Puerto Rican-born persons living in the United States have settled in New York City, migration to other communities is on the increase as new job opportunities open up.

In 1940, Puerto Rican-born persons in New York City accounted for 88 per cent of the total Puerto Rican-born population of mainland. By 1950, this figure had dropped to 83 per cent; today it is down to 77 per cent. Only about 65 per cent of the new migrants are settling in New York City.

At the end of 1957, there were some 797,000 persons in continental United States who were born in Puerto Rico or born on the mainland of Puerto Rican parentage. The largest numbers were located in the following cities:

New York City	620,000
Chicago, Ill.	25,000
Philadelphia, Pa.	13,000
Bridgeport, Conn.	7,000
Camden, N. J.	5,000
Miami, Fla.	5,000
Cleveland, Ohio	4,000
Lorain, Ohio	4,000
Perth Amboy, N. J.	4,000
San Francisco and Oakland, Calif.	3,600
Springfield, Mass.	3,500
Newark, N. J.	3,200
Buffalo, N. Y.	3,000
Milwaukee, Wis.	3,000

Since 1930, the U. S. census has reported Puerto Ricans living in all 48 states and the District of Columbia. Today Puerto Ricans are known to be residing in some 150 U. S. towns and cities.

THE JOBS THEY DO

In New York and other cities, Puerto Ricans are filling labor shortages in practically every type of industry. The majority of the women employed in New York City work in the needle trades; long famous for their exquisite hand-needlework, they are proving equally skillful in machine operations.

For men, the single major source of employment is in hotels and restaurants which, together with the other service industries, are increasingly important to the city's economy. Puerto Rican workers are also found in practically every industry in the city—the manufacture of office equipment, electrical and electronic products, plastics, optical goods, toys and candy. Many are employed in hospitals and other institutions.

Outside New York City, principal jobs include: foundry work, leather tanning, shoe manufacture and electronics in Chicago and Milwaukee; steel in Bethlehem, Pa., and Lorain and Youngstown, Ohio; men's clothing in Rochester; radio and TV manufacturing in northern New Jersey.

MIGRATORY AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

In addition to those who move here to become permanent residents of continental United States, some 30,000 Puerto Ricans come to the States annually to fill farm labor shortages during the peak of the season. About 15,000 of these agricultural workers come under a contract arranged between the U. S. Employment Service and the affiliated Employment Service of Puerto Rico. The contract is designed to protect both the worker and the farmer, guaranteeing prevailing wages and work for a stated period, providing for medical insurance and compensation. The program is administered on the mainland by the Migration Division of the Puerto Rico Department of Labor.

The remaining 15,000 come on their own and are known as "walk-ins." Often they are workers who

have come under contract in previous years and have subsequently made individual arrangements with farmers for whom they worked.

Most of the agricultural workers return to Puerto Rico when the season ends. However, some are offered year-round jobs in agriculture or industry, send for their families, and settle permanently in the States.

Since the crop season in the United States corresponds with the slack season in sugar cane—a winter crop in Puerto Rico—these workers are able to perform a vital function for U. S. farmers without detriment to the island's agriculture. In New Jersey alone, crops harvested by Puerto Ricans last year ran to an estimated $120 million.

The Problems of New Migrants

Puerto Ricans are facing many of the same problems which have confronted earlier groups arriving in the United States from other cultures.

THE ADJUSTMENT PROCESS

The history of previous migrations shows that complete integration of a new group into our culture is a process spanning three generations.

In order to speed up and smooth out necessary adjustments, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, through the Migration Division of its Department of Labor, is making every effort to assist the migrant in adjusting to his new community, while furthering the community's knowledge and understanding of its new residents. The Migration Division has a staff

of 106, including specialists in employment, community organization, social work, education and information. The Division has offices in 11 U. S. cities: a Central and New York City office in New York; regional offices in Chicago and Cleveland; and field offices in Hartford, Conn.; Boston, Mass.; Camden and Keyport, N. J.; Middletown, Riverhead, and Rochester, N. Y.; and Hamburg, Pa. The Migration Division also has an office in Puerto Rico which carries out orientation programs for persons who plan to come to the States.

PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

It is a truism that ignorance and fear give rise to prejudice; thus, the old barbs of bigotry and discrimination often directed against the newcomer are readily understandable. Moreover, insecure, unthinking people often find it easy to blame their grievances on any newcomer with ways different from their own. As a result, the newcomer's own feelings of insecurity and rejection are accentuated, often driving him toward similar prejudicial attitudes and behavior. Thus, the derogatory name-calling to which each new ethnic group entering the States has been subjected has often done permanent damage.

The pattern of anti-Negro discrimination and segregation is especially puzzling and painful to the darker-skinned migrant. In Puerto Rico, white and Negro have lived peacefully side by side for four-and-a-half centuries. Discrimination based on color is unknown, except in upper-class circles where the old Spanish tradition of disdain for manual workers

has grown to include a color prejudice. Because the persistence of color discrimination on the mainland is becoming known to Puerto Ricans, only about eight per cent of the migrants are Negro, although Negroes constitute 20 per cent of the island's population.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Hardships created by prejudice, discrimination, poor living conditions, and different customs are dimmed, if not forgotten, by the second generation as the group becomes integrated. However, it would be helpful if all of us had a deeper realization and understanding of the hardships and difficulties endured by many Puerto Ricans:

(1) The position of women in Latin-American society differs in many respects from their position in the United States. Women are more strictly supervised, more restricted in their activities, more confined to the home, both as children and adults, than in the States. It is difficult for many Puerto Rican women to adjust to their new role, nor are similar adjustments easy for the other family members. The relationship of an adolescent girl to her parents is often especially difficult.

(2) Because New York City's industrial needs have caused more Puerto Rican women to be employed than men, the wife sometimes earns more than her husband. When this happens, the husband's loss of stature in his own eyes and in the eyes of his wife and children may create tension in family relationships.

(3) Because rents are extremely high, both parents often must work to feed, house, and clothe the family. The plight of the children in a motherless home, frequently cramped and crowded, may create emotional disturbances requiring special attention and great understanding.

LANGUAGE

Language barriers handicap every new ethnic group. Many migrants are afraid to use the English they know because they feel unaccepted themselves and feel that their errors in English will be ridiculed. Moreover, color discrimination among mainland Americans puts pressure on many darker-skinned Puerto Ricans to speak Spanish in order to be differentiated from American Negroes.

HOUSING

In many areas, especially in New York City, Puerto Ricans are faced with severe housing shortages, resulting both from an actual lack of sufficient housing and from discriminatory practices. They have little choice as to the housing they are able to obtain and, like many other migrant groups, often find it difficult to adjust to their new surroundings. The newcomer is often blamed for poor housing conditions which existed long before his arrival. Insufficient housing is characteristic of practically every city with an expanding economy which attracts new workers. It is only the unethical landlord who profits from slums—not the people who have to live there because no other housing is available to them.

A canard often circulated about Puerto Ricans is that they fly to New York City to get on relief. Actually, migrants come seeking jobs and arrive by air, not because they are affluent, but because it is the most economical means of travel.

The most recent summary of the welfare picture in New York City appeared in *The New York Times* on June 2, 1957 ("City Relief Roll Held Down Despite Job-Hunter Influx; Costs Found No Higher Than in Rest of U. S.," by Peter Kihss.) Statistics showed that the percentage of the population receiving relief in the city was just about the same as in the country as a whole—3.5 per cent. "About 11 per cent of the city's Puerto Ricans and 10 per cent of its Negroes may be on relief. Nine out of ten would thus be fully self-supporting, while many others receive 'supplementation' relief only, to fill out inadequate earnings," the article stated. Those receiving supplementation relief are persons who are fully employed but whose earnings are not sufficient to meet minimum family needs. A Welfare Department study on new arrivals who have obtained relief indicates that the Puerto Ricans had been here longer before receiving relief than any other group.

The *Times* article quotes New York City's Welfare Commissioner McCarthy as follows: "We cannot enjoy the benefits of Puerto Rican labor without assuming some additional welfare costs. On balance, the taxable values created by their labor must far exceed the additional welfare tax burden."

Newcomers — who are often forced to live in slums, who lack an adequate knowledge of English, and who are conspicuous in their new environment —are always more likely to get into trouble with the police than the average citizen.

When these factors are carefully considered, *Time* magazine's statement of October 29, 1956, is all the more impressive: "New York's Puerto Rican minority, six per cent of the population, is responsible for only a shade more than six per cent of the crime." Similar reports come from other areas as well. For example: "The incidence of crime among the Puerto Ricans has been very low. Almost all runins with the law have resulted from lack of understanding about motor vehicle laws."—*Trentonian* (Trenton, N. J.), Oct. 14, 1957. "There is no evidence that the Puerto Rican in Reading today is a problem. He is not living on relief, not drawing unemployment checks, not arrested in higher percentage than whites or Negroes."—*Reading (Pa.) Record*, Oct. 11, 1957.

III. PUERTO RICO'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Puerto Rico is an old country which enjoys an unusual blend of ancient Spanish culture combined with many aspects of American culture. Puerto Rico is making contributions on the international scene far out of proportion to her size and importance.

THE POINT IV PROGRAM

During the past several years the island has served as a training laboratory for our Point IV program of technical assistance to underdeveloped countries. Over 4,000 engineers, factory managers, public administrators, health officers, teachers, labor leaders, and planning officials from 103 different countries have visited Puerto Rico to study its methods of economic development. In many instances, the island's techniques for overcoming underdevelopment—the relatively small factories and small-scale economic and social programs—have proved more helpful to foreign students and experts than the massive projects carried out in the already highly developed United States. Puerto Rico's "Operation Bootstrap" is now known the world over, and to many underdeveloped countries it symbolizes what can be accomplished in a short time and in a democratic way.

Today, Puerto Rican experts on education, diet,

agriculture, and social and economic development are serving with U. S. and U. N. agencies in various countries, with the Organization of American States, and with other international agencies.

Puerto Rico is acting as a cultural meeting ground, contributing to better understanding not only between the United States and Latin America, but also between the United States and many other countries throughout the world.

TRADE WITH THE U. S.

Few realize that Puerto Rico is one of the world's largest buyers of U. S. products—our Number One customer on a per capita basis. In 1956-57, Puerto Rico spent $635 million for U. S. products—over $1.7 million *per day*.

IN THE U. S. ARMED FORCES

Puerto Rico's 65th U. S. Infantry Regiment gained fame in World War II and again in Korea. Over 75,000 Puerto Ricans served in World War II and over 43,000 in Korea. Ninety-one per cent of those who fought in Korea were volunteers. General Douglas MacArthur, as Commander of the United Nations forces, praised the 65th's "brilliant record of achievement in battle."

SOME WELL-KNOWN PUERTO RICANS

Many Puerto Ricans are well known in the United States—notably such performing artists as José Ferrer, one of the outstanding actor-directors in the American theatre; movie star Rita Moreno;

Graciela Rivera, famous opera singer; Jesús María Sanromá, concert pianist; Tito Puente, popular orchestra leader; Juano Hernandez, veteran motion-picture actor; Olga San Juan, stage and film star.

Puerto Rican baseball players in the major leagues—such as Vic Power, Rubén Gómez, Félix Mantilla, Juan Pizarro, Luis Arroyo, Roberto Clemente, and Jim Rivera—are well known to fans.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE MIGRANTS

In addition to their contributions in industry, agriculture, sports, and the arts, Puerto Ricans also bring with them many spiritual and cultural values which we might hope to see adopted here:

(1) The solidarity of the family group—which assumes a responsibility for its members far beyond the general mainland pattern.

(2) A less material standard of values and a philosophy which judges and respects a person for what he is and does rather than for how much he has.

(3) An attitude toward differences in skin color far ahead of mainland prejudices.

(4) A deep sense of the dignity of the individual.

(5) A grace and joy of living which could be a major contribution to the American scene. It is doubtful if the change could be so marked as to close department stores for a mid-day siesta as they do in Puerto Rico, but if the Latin culture could slow down the pace of the New Yorker and inject a degree of Spanish graciousness into the subway rush hour —it would be wonderful.

IV. WHAT *NOT* TO SAY

Some speakers, with the best of intentions, unknowingly offend people of Puerto Rican background with references that are inaccurate. Below are a few common faux pas to be avoided:

Don't refer to a Puerto Rican as an immigrant. Although he comes from a different culture, he is an American citizen, a migrant from the island to the mainland and in the same category as one who migrates from California to New York.

Don't forget that when a Puerto Rican migrates to the mainland, he has all the rights and privileges of every other first-class citizen.

Don't create a Puerto Rican stereotype based on the lower working classes. It is offensive to the many college graduates who are successful doctors, engineers, and other professionals, as well as to Puerto Rican businessmen of the middle and upper economic groups. In addition, there are many differences, both group and individual, at *any* given economic level which tend to make generalities false.

Don't assume that all Spanish-speaking people are Puerto Ricans. Spain, Mexico, many of the islands in the Caribbean, and most of the countries in Central and South America use the Spanish language. In New York City, there are about 150,000 Spanish-speaking people from countries other than Puerto Rico.

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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For additional information write to:

Information Section
Migration Division, Dept. of Labor
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
88 Columbus Avenue
New York 23, N. Y.

VI. SERVICES OF THE MIGRATION DIVISION

At the request of many social and community leaders, the following brief summary of services offered by the Migration Division of the Puerto Rico Department of Labor is included:

ADDRESS:

Migration Division, Department of Labor
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
88 Columbus Avenue
New York 23, N. Y.

TELEPHONE:
SUsquehanna 7-2900

SERVICES:

Employment Section: Secures jobs for applicants, working closely with the New York State Employment Service; offers consultation on labor legislation, minimum wages, etc.

Social Service Section: Acts primarily as a referral service for social work problems, and offers consultation in special cases.

Community Organization Section: Assists in the organization and development of Puerto Rican civic, educational, and social groups; works with other community relations workers in these fields.

Identification Section: Assists Puerto Ricans in obtaining needed legal documents (birth certificates, marriage licenses, etc.) from the island; issues cards identifying

Puerto Ricans as American citizens where such proof is required for Government employment, etc.

Education Section: Prepares and distributes educational materials; arranges for meetings and conferences on educational subjects; handles questions related to schools; arranges for speakers; maintains a reference library open to the public.

Information Section: Publishes and distributes materials relating to Puerto Rico and the migration; acts as a general information office; handles film loans.

Service Section: In charge of the field offices of the Division and the program for migratory agricultural workers.

NOTE: The Migration Division does not seek to duplicate the work of any existing community agency. It acts primarily as a consultant to the community and as an aid to the newcomer in his orientation and adjustment to his new environment. Migration Division offices in other cities *(See pp. 23-24)* *carry out similar functions.*